

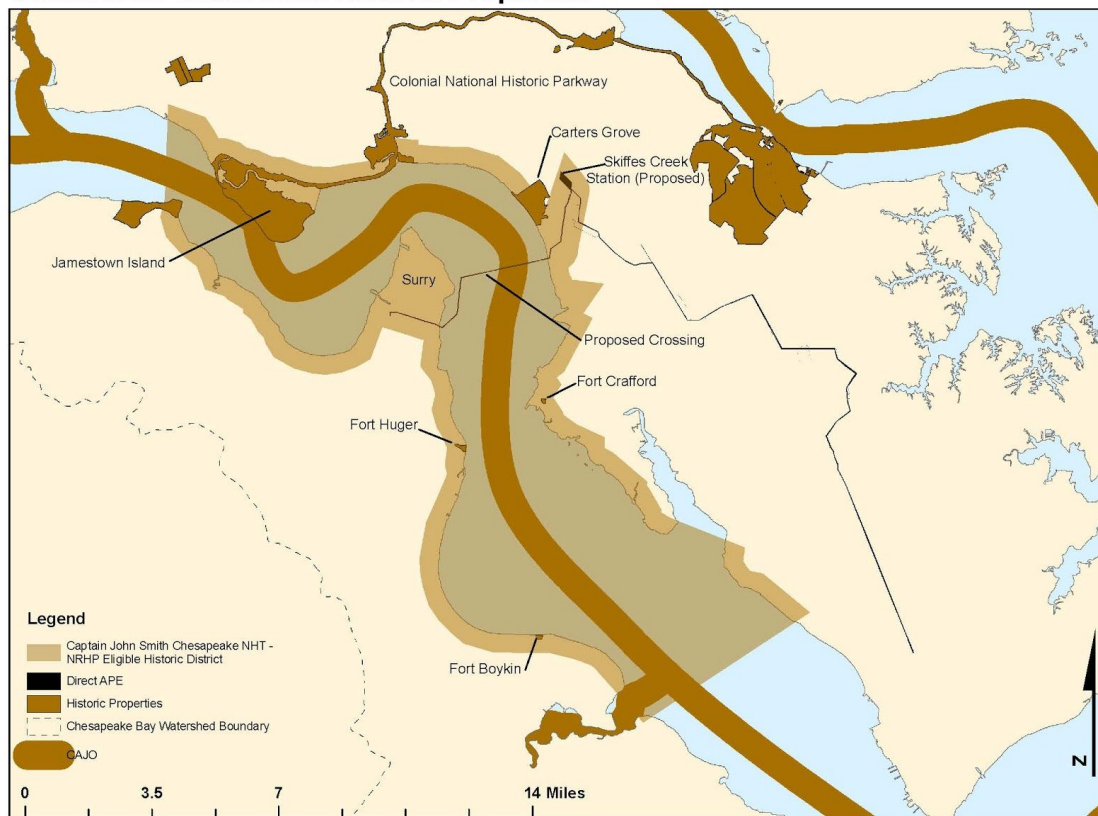
Updated June 16, 2016

Overview of the Proposed Transmission Line Project over the James River

Dominion Virginia Power has submitted a proposal to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build the Surry-Skiffes Creek-Whealton Transmission Line, an overhead power line that would cross the James River just east of Jamestown Island.

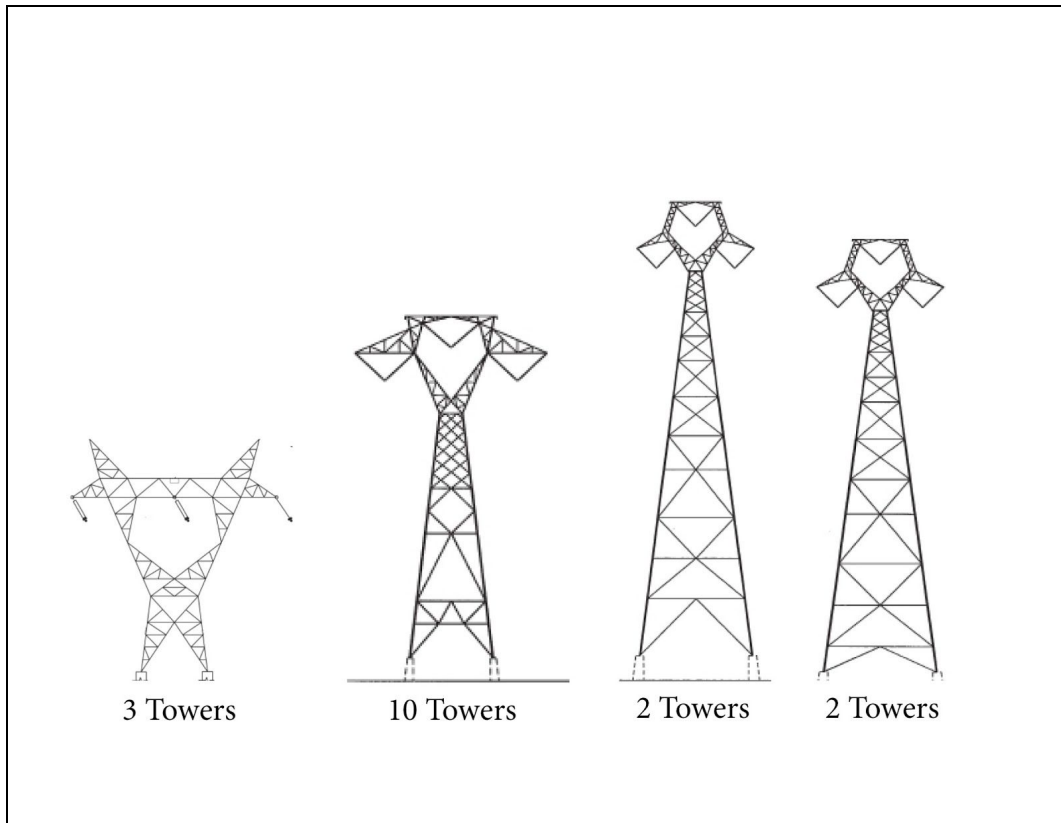
The National Park Service affected sites are the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, Colonial National Historical Park (including Jamestown Island and the Colonial Parkway), and Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail. In addition, the project affects Carter's Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark and other properties within Virginia's "Historic Triangle."

Jamestown Island Area Historic Properties



What does the project involve?

Dominion Virginia Power has decided to retire its coal-fired power plants in Yorktown, Virginia, and states it needs to compensate for the loss of power. Dominion's proposal involves the construction of a new 7.76 mile, 500kV aerial transmission line from Surry (VA) nuclear power plant, crossing the James River east of Jamestown Island, to a proposed Skiffes Creek switching station. The proposed power line would make an approximately 4.1 mile crossing of the James River, requiring placement of 17 towers (up to 295' high) and related infrastructure within and above the river bed. It would also heighten another 27 land-based towers in the immediate area.



17 Proposed In-water Towers (tallest: 295 feet high)

Why is the federal government involved?

The project requires state approval and a federal permit to cross a navigable waterway. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the federal permitting agency and responsible for conducting National Historic Preservation Act and National Environmental Policy Act compliance.

Why does the National Park Service care about the project?

The project would cross through Virginia's "Historic Triangle" and have substantial impacts on several nationally significant historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The power line would cross over the water route of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, approximately six miles east of Jamestown Island. It is within view of the island and numerous points along Colonial Parkway, Carter's Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark, and the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail. The John Smith Chesapeake Trail's resources and visitor experience will be the most severely affected, as the transmission line infrastructure crosses immediately over an integral portion of the water route of the national historic trail.

More than 400 years ago, in April 1607, Englishmen representing the Virginia Company of London arrived and soon established the first permanent English colony in North America, selecting Jamestown Island for the location of their fort. The chosen island was in the territory of the Paspahegh Indians and close to scores of other Indian communities with established towns, working landscapes, and sacred places. Today, visitors to Historic Jamestowne, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Colonial Parkway can experience landscapes and waterscapes that are reminiscent of that time.

The proposed overhead line would introduce a major, modern and industrial element in the Jamestown Island landscape. There is no other man-made structure crossing the river in this 55 mile stretch of the

James. Since the 1930s, the private sector and local, state and federal governments have made major investments in protecting the shoreline landscape in the area, establishing state and national parks, wildlife management areas and stimulating a \$1 billion tourism industry.

Viewed from the river and the shoreline, the landscape has retained an appearance where visitors can imagine Englishmen and the ancestors of today's Virginia Indian people on the land and on the water. The impact of existing modern development visible from the river is relatively limited allowing the landscape to retain a feeling evocative of the 17th century character.

Because of its size, scale and location across the river, the proposed transmission line would forever alter the setting of Jamestown Island, the Colonial Parkway, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and Carter's Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark. The evocative views across and within the river are critical to the historic character of these national treasures and have been conserved for over 400 years.



View toward the project area from Colonial National Historical Park

Background:

- Dominion filed an application with the State Corporation Commission SCC in June 2012 for a certificate of public convenience and necessity. On November 26, 2013, the SCC approved Dominion's request to build the proposed new high voltage electric transmission lines
- Dominion submitted a pre-construction notification for a nationwide permit to the USACE

2012/2013; USACE initiated a public comment period in August 2013 for permitting under Section 404, 401 (CWA) and Section 10 (RHA).

- The USACE initiated Section 106 and NEPA consultation in mid-2014, though all subsequent USACE public activities have focused on Section 106. The USACE has held five consulting parties meetings (September 25 and December 8, 2014, and June 24, October 15, 2015 and February 2, 2016) to consider and identify historic properties that might be affected by the project, present an assessment of effects to historic properties, and discuss mitigation needs. NPS staff has participated in all of the meetings along with an extensive list of other consulting parties.
- Regional Director Michael Caldwell for the NPS Northeast Region testified at an October 30, 2015 public meeting stating that the Surry-Skiffes Creek transmission line should not be constructed and calling for an Environmental Impact Statement.
- Consulting parties have expressed substantial concern in meetings and correspondence over the needs for considering alternatives to the overhead line proposal and for more complete analysis of impacts to historic properties and other resources.
- Since 2012, the NPS has submitted numerous written comments detailing serious concerns about impacts from the project. These communications have detailed: NPS resources of concern; the potential impacts to these resources; the need for additional analysis of impacts and for alternatives that would avoid impacts to nationally significant resources.
- The NPS also provided the USACE with a detailed analysis of visual impacts. NPS prepared the visual impacts analysis which was transmitted to the USACE on September 16 2015. The analysis demonstrates the extent of impacts to resources and identifies the need for USACE to conduct more thorough analyses.

Current Status:

Section 106 (of National Historic Preservation Act) Review:

Assessment of Effects:

- USACE released an assessment of effects on historic resources in October 2015. In November NPS and other interested parties provided numerous comments pointing out that the assessment was not complete and that it understated impacts to the area's historic resources.

Resolution of Effects:

- On December 10 2015, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (the organization that oversees compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act) advised USACE of the need to address NPS and other parties' concerns about the assessment of effects before proceeding to discuss any possible mitigation.
- On December 29 2015, the USACE released a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) prepared by Dominion Virginia Power proposing mitigation actions for the project. The NPS responded to the USACE request for comments on the MOA and participated in a February 2 Consulting Parties meeting. NPS has since issued a series of letters reiterating detailed requests for additional analysis of impacts, consideration of alternatives, and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.
- On March 3 2016, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation forwarded a letter to the USACE reiterating their concerns about the Corps Section 106 process to date—noting deficiencies in the view shed analysis, cumulative impact analysis and noting that an EIS would be the best instrument to complete the overall analysis.
- On June 13 2016, the USACE released a revised draft MOA prepared by Dominion Virginia Power

and requested comments on the document by July 15 2016.

NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Review:

- USACE has indicated they plan to follow the NEPA process for the project - completing an environmental assessment (EA) to inform a decision of whether to: (a) issue a “finding of no significant impact” (FONSI) with documentation that impacts can/will be mitigated; (b) deny a permit for the project based on its impact to public resources; or (c) proceed with an “environmental impact statement” to examine impacts and alternatives in greater detail. USACE has noted that no decision has yet been made on these options.

On December 11, 2015, NPS Director Jonathan Jarvis wrote USACE Commanding General Thomas Bostick detailing NPS objections to the project and urging the USACE to deny a permit and encourage Dominion to explore alternatives. This is the NPS position on the project.

For More Information about Affected NPS Areas:

- Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail www.nps.gov/cajo
- Colonial National Historical Park www.nps.gov/colo
- Historic Jamestowne www.nps.gov/jame
- Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail www.nps.gov/waro